CPI Mentor Program Guide

Welcome to the CPI Mentor Program! We're excited you have chosen to take this step to expand your network and professional development.

Mentor/Mentee Tips & Guidelines

General

- Meet for one hour per month during the mentorship session.
- Determine your preferred communication forms. CPI suggests video calls or meeting in person.
- Discuss your goals for the mentoring relationship.
- Schedule consistent monthly meetings in advance.
- Maintain confidentiality within your meetings.
- Take notes on your meetings. You may want to reference discussion points at a later date.

Mentees

- It is your responsibility to prepare for and lead the mentor/mentee meetings.
- Create a meeting agenda or choose discussion topics at least one week prior to your meeting. Send the information to your mentor in advance, so they can feel prepared for the meeting.
- Ask questions and talk about the topics that are relevant to you.
- Take time to reflect on and consider the ideas discussed in your meetings.
- Express gratitude to your mentor; they are offering great guidance to you!

Mentors

- Be prepared with some topics you could discuss, in case your mentee is unsure what to discuss.
- Ask your mentee for their thoughts on topics that interest you. We want you to learn and grow as well!
- Find ways to challenge your mentee, even assigning them with a specific task.
- Provide guidance and feedback to your mentee.
- Determine what barriers your mentee may be facing and help them overcome them.

Activity Ideas

- Write down your goals for the mentoring relationship.
- Read a book or an article together.
- Listen to a common podcast.
- Watch some TED Talks or YouTube videos.
- Find a common conference, networking event, or educational session to attend.
- Share resources, then discuss them.
- Discuss your career goals and create an Individual Development Plan.
- Review each other's resumes and LinkedIn profiles.
- Volunteer in the community together.
- Job shadow your mentor.
- Hold an "Ask Me Anything" session with each other.
- Role-play a crucial conversation.
- Do an independent activity for the month (e.g., gratitude journal), then share what you learned.
- Complete a personality or CliftonStrengths assessment and review your results together.

Discussion Suggestions

Explore your curiosity, listen intently, share openly, and engage intentionally. Ask questions and discuss topics that are most relevant to you. This is your experience; make the most of it! You are welcome to develop your own questions and activities, but here are some topic/question ideas to help you get started:

Get To Know Each Other - First Meeting

- What brought you to the state of Iowa? What has kept you in the state of Iowa?
- What is your educational background?
- Is your office centralized or decentralized? How does this impact your work?
- What do you like to do outside of work?
- What was your first job in this industry? How did your career progress?
- What are the challenges and rewards of your job?
- What is your vision for this mentorship relationship? What can we do to make this an effective and impactful experience?

Career Advising / Coaching

- What are some of your advising best practices?
- What are your tips for relationship building with students?
- What types of questions do you ask students during appointments?
- How do you deal with tough advising cases?
- How do you advise/coach students who are unsure of their major or future career? Do you use any assessments in your advising/coaching practice?

Career Growth

- How did you get from where you started to where you are now? What were the important steps?
- Who has had the greatest influence on you professionally?
- What do I need to do to prepare for the next step of my career?
- What has been one of the most challenging experiences in your career?
- How can I gain more confidence in my work?

DEI

- What resources do you recommend for special populations, such as international students, military/veteran, LGBTQ+, students with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, etc.?
- What strategies do you use to incorporate DEI into your employer engagement?
- In what ways do you actively seek out diverse perspectives?
- What has your office done to help create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for students?
- How does your office support or hinder DEI?

Employer Outreach

- Do you have any tips for employer outreach?
- How could you improve your employer outreach?
- Do you visit employers? What information do you cover during your visits?
- How do you help connect employers with students?
- Do you help faculty and student groups secure industry presenters?
- How does your office vet employers to ensure quality experiences for your students?
- What are your most successful employer events?

Faculty/Staff Engagement

- In what ways do you collaborate with other departments on campus?
- How does your office advocate for High Impact Career Practices?
- What suggestions do you have for building faculty relationships?
- What role does your office play in educating faculty and staff about career development?
- How do you collaborate with faculty or staff for programming and events?

First-Destination Surveys / Data

- Tell me about your experience with first-destination survey (FDS) data.
- What strategies do you use to gather FDS data?
- How have you used FDS data to promote your services and create resources for students, employers, faculty, staff, and administration?
- Do you collaborate with any other offices or classes to collect FDS data?
- How can I improve our FDS response rate?

Future of Career Services

- What do you envision for the future of career services?
- How do you/your colleagues use AI in your work?
- How can career services remain relevant for job seekers of the future?
- What tips do you have for updating services and programming to meet the needs of today's - and tomorrow's - students?

Hiring & Supervising Others

- What tips do you have for hiring and supervising others? What resources can help me learn more?
- What are some things supervisors do to make sure their supervisees feel valued and appreciated?
- How do you provide feedback for supervisees?
- Can you give me examples of a great supervisor and unsatisfactory supervisor you've had? What made them different?
- How do you help your supervisees stay motivated?

Manager Relationships

- How do you communicate your work and accomplishments with your supervisor?
- How can I make my 1:1 meetings more effective?
- How can I get to know my supervisor better?
- What suggestions do you have for successfully navigating my annual review?
- How can I tactfully provide feedback to my supervisor?
- Have you ever had a difficult supervisor? How did you handle that situation?

Marketing

- How do you market your services/programs/office to students? To employers? To faculty and staff?
- Which methods of marketing have been most effective for you?
- What challenges do you face related to marketing?
- Does your office use social media to reach students? Is it effective? Who manages it?
- How can I improve the way I market career services on campus?

Mental Health & Boundaries

- Would you help me evaluate and prioritize my responsibilities, so I can set better boundaries?
- What suggestions do you have for me in talking with my supervisor about boundaries?
- Is your work all in-office, or do you have hybrid/ remote or flexible scheduling options?
- How do you effectively balance/integrate your home and work lives?
- What can I do to improve my mental health when I'm approaching burnout?

Navigating Office Culture

- In what ways can I seek more feedback at work?
- As a newer professional, how do you recommend tactfully sharing my opinions with other staff?
- How does your office/department celebrate each other and boost morale?
- How do you navigate conflict in the workplace?

Networking

- What methods have you used to grow your network? How do you maintain your connections?
- What cross-campus relationships have you found to be important? How did you start forming those relationships?
- What effective measures has your office used to stay connected with alumni?
- Do you have suggestions for other professional connections for me?
- How have you used professional associations to build your network?

Personal Brand

- Based on what you know about me, what is your perception of my personal brand?
- How can I differentiate myself from others with similar skills and expertise?
- How can I improve my personal brand on LinkedIn?
- What have you done to intentionally build your personal brand?

Presenting & Teaching

- What topics do you find most difficult to present on, and how have you worked to overcome that?
- Have you ever taught a class? What was the experience like? How did the course evolve? What was covered in the curriculum?
- How can I increase my confidence in presenting and teaching?
- How do you engage people during presentations?
- What tips do you have for virtual presentations?
- What technologies do you incorporate into your presentations?
- How have you gained presentation opportunities? How can I expand my cross-campus presentations?

Professional Development

- What resources do you recommend for keeping up to date in the industry?
- Which groups and professional organizations do you belong to? Which groups or influencers do you follow on social media?
- What does your professional development budget look like? How can I advocate for more professional development funds or opportunities?
- How have you found leadership opportunities in or outside of your office? How can I develop stronger leadership skills?
- What trainings or resources would you recommend for expanding my DEI knowledge?
- What tasks could I take on to gain skills and move to the next level, professionally?

Programming

- What types of programs does your office provide for students? Which programs have been most successful?
- Do you utilize the NACE Career Readiness Competencies to shape your programming?
- Have you implemented any new programs at work? What challenges did you face? What were the results?
- How do you decide which programming to offer for students?
- How do you use data to collect feedback and assess the effectiveness of your programs?

Resources For Students

- What resources do you typically recommend for students?
- Has your office created any video resources or credentials for students? What are they like? How were they created? What topics are covered?
- Has your office created any student resources that are used by other faculty and staff?
- How do you market your resources to students? Do students utilize the resources?

Enjoy your time together! With questions or feedback, please contact cpi@iowa-cpi.org.